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Digging deep – 1975

With the school term a week or so away, parents have been forced to dig deeper than ever to kit out their children in the approved uniform.

At the Co-op, prices of a girl's school skirt range from £3.15 to £4.25, white blouses cost from £3 and sweaters from £3.50.

Boys' trousers start at £4.25, shirts from £2.45, and a blazer from £7.75 to £8.30. A tie is 65p and shoes upwards of £5 a pair.

School uniforms at Coleridge Secondary School in 1971

Drivers requested to move at once – 1924

Concerning the parking of motor cars on Ely Market Hill at night, the police have no objection provided no obstruction is caused.

On rare occasions, a large lorry or two came into the town late at night and was placed by the side of the Corn Exchange. They always left early next morning.

In the case of all cars and other vehicles left on the hill, which were likely to be a danger to pedestrians, the drivers were requested to move them at once.

Ely sugar beet factory will open this month 1925

Such good progress has been made since activities first commenced in October last that it is expected that the Ely beet sugar factory will be fully erected and equipped within the next four weeks or so.

The whole frontage of the river has been concreted and unloading berths provided for 30 barges.

There are farmers situated several miles from a railway station but, near the river and the factory, the company has its own fleet of steel barges which will be towed by tugs propelled by oil engines.

Two overhead cranes, worked by electrical power, can be run along the quayside and used to empty the barges.

Traffic at Ely marketplace in the 1930s

Ely beet barges

Illustration from 19th century

'A mouse has terrors for the female mind' – 1909

Fatigued by an evening spent in picking fruit, a Swavesey young lady sat down to supper when she felt a bite or sting. She searched for the intrusive insect, but it was something more terrifying: a mouse ran from her clothing and a mouse has terrors for the female mind.

Even the boldest suffragette who has smacked the face of a gentleman clad in official blue or spent long hours on the roof of a public building is understood to quail before a mouse.

So the Swavesey young lady's fright can well be imagined.

It's a Barnum and Bailey world – 1898

The one and only 'Barnum and Bailey Greatest Show on Earth' will be held on the grounds on Huntingdon Road, on September 08.
An overwhelming equestrian department, teeming with every valuable attraction, filled with wonders, overflowing with grand features, crowded with startling surprises, brim-full of novelties, running over with mirthful scenes, and abounding with thrilling sensations and glorious events.
Presenting, in vast amplitude of detail, a wild beast, chariot and pedestrian races, fearless contests, and trials of speed, skill and endurance.
A world's fair of modern marvels. 1,000 men, women, giants, midgets, dwarfs, tattooed people, sword swallowers, bearded and long-haired ladies, dog-faced boys, armless and legless men, and snake charmers – 1,000 marvellous sights and curious creations.
One ticket admits to all the attractions.

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